

## Status of Partnership Agreement

The Council on Postsecondary Education, on behalf of the Commonwealth, entered into a Partnership Agreement with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights for the purpose of improving educational opportunities for African Americans in Kentucky's public postsecondary education system.

The agreement sets forth the commitments that will bring Kentucky into full compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the Fordice standards. The council submitted status reports to the OCR in August 2000, July 2001, and January 2002. The OCR staff indicated that it is encouraged with the progress the Commonwealth and its postsecondary institutions continue to make in implementing the Partnership Agreement.

The fourth status report will be forwarded to the OCR by December 2002. It is anticipated that the OCR will identify areas of particular concern that should be addressed in the report. These areas will be in addition to the general summaries of progress toward each commitment in the agreement. Following are highlights of information that will be reported in the fourth status report to the OCR.

### **Enhancement of Kentucky State University**

Of the five commitments to enhance Kentucky State University, three remain incomplete: complete renovation of Hathaway Hall, renovation of Young Hall dormitory, and strengthening the teacher education program.

The Commonwealth does not have a biennial budget enacted by the General Assembly and the two capital projects cannot be completed until a budget is enacted. Strengthening the teacher education program is being addressed through the Education Professional Standards Board, which was created by the General Assembly to oversee all teacher education programs in Kentucky. The council collaborates with the EPSB to lend resources and support to KSU efforts.

The Kentucky State University Board of Regents and the council issued a joint request for proposals to complete a comprehensive assessment of KSU's academic programs and the use and adequacy of resources. The study should be complete in January 2003.

### **Recruitment and Retention of African American Students**

Preliminary enrollment reports by public colleges and universities reveal significant increases. Institutions believe that more students remained in school in fall 2002 compared to fall 2001. A

more detailed analysis including specific data for African American students will be completed after final student enrollment data is reviewed.

### **Enhancement of Campus Climate for African American Students**

Each university has created a team to address campus climate and community related issues that affect African American students, faculty, or staff. Reports of these activities and recommendations to the presidents and governing boards will be provided to the council staff in December. The focus of these teams is to encourage an open, welcoming atmosphere that celebrates and supports cultural diversity.

### **Special Reports**

The University of Louisville has been asked by the OCR to provide more information about student participation and success with the Pathways to Success Enrollment Management Program.

The partnership agreement expires December 31, 2002. The agreement may be extended, as necessary, for completion of certain items committed to in the agreement. The OCR will notify the Commonwealth of its decision by March 2003.

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